

The elimination of the 5-word-per-minute code requirement, contrary to some of those who have already filed their comments, will not result in the amateur service turning into another 11-meter debacle. First, people in the CB-service DO NOT want to take any test, or they would already be an amateur radio operator. Second, many of those who "passed" the code requirement act worse than those on 11-meters. On this point, I wonder if the CB-operators had their friends give them an amateur license after listening to the various, unprofessional transmissions that I have heard over the years as well as purported Extra Class operators asking questions a Tech could easily answer. Third, it boils down to "I had to do it, so you have to as well." From the 1920's until the 1950's, the Morse code was the PRIMARY method that one amateur contact another, so it only made sense to test the proficiency of a person's Morse code SENDING and RECEIVING abilities. Besides, the code requirement gave the US government a trained cadre of Morse code operators that could be impressed into federal service if WWII erupted. After the adoption of the VEC program, most licensees cannot say that they were tested for both. In fact, the majority of those who qualified for Element-1, Element-1b, and Element-1c only had to take a "multiple-guess" test to see if they could receive Morse code. I remember many Extra class operators crowing that they were actually "no-code extras" as they barely passed the 13-words per minute and 20-word per minute tests, and could not copy any code whatsoever now. After the mid-1980's, a pool of trained Morse code operators was no longer needed as the federal government, including the Navy, abandoned Morse code as its primary, or even secondary, mode of transmission. When I was in Germany with the US Army in the 1980's, only the Sergeant First Class in charge of our communications section knew what Morse code was! In fact, we only tested our AM HF gear once a year to see if it even worked by listening for DX AM stations. Last, there probably isn't one of those who made a negative comment regarding the continued US requirement of the Morse code who would pass contacting an international "no-code" team operating out of North Korea to garner this rare DX entity even though they now want the Commission to believe that those without Morse code proficiency are not capable of operating on the frequencies below 30 Mhz. In closing, no other method of transmitting is tested for proficiency (e.g., phone, PSK31, RTTY, etc.) so why should the US government require the testing of the Morse code that is now just ONE of many forms of communication that an amateur operator can use on all allocated amateur bands either above or below 30 Mhz? As the Commission noted during the last restructuring that eliminated the irrelevant Novice class, the approximately 20,000 members of this class who have not even had the desire or esprit de corp to take a 30-question test to upgrade to Tech-plus let

alone upgrade to General, and the Advance class, who I believe should have been automatically upgraded to Extra class, the international requirement that one must be tested for Morse code proficiency prevented the Commission from eliminating the code requirement at that time.